178.

FAMILIAR LETTERS

ON A

VARIETY OF SUBJECTS,

ADDRESSED TO

A FRIEND.

By the Rev. EDWARD BARRY, M. D.

AUTHOR OF THEOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND MORAL ESSAYS, &c. &c.

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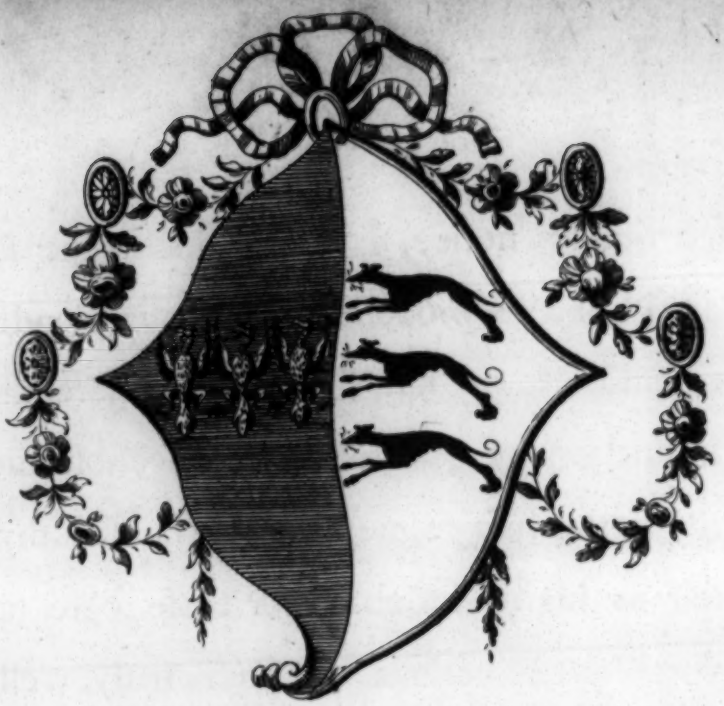

To Mrs. MARY MESTAYER,

Of PROSPECT-HILL,

In the COUNTY of BERKS.

My very dear Madam,

BESIDES expoſing myſelf to the conſcious charge of plagiariſm in ſuch of theſe letters as may be found worthy of any

 particular

particular notice, I ſhould incur the ſevereſt of all reproaches, if, for your friendly attention to my happineſs and welfare, the injunctions of gratitude and affection did not better inſpire me thus to confeſs myſelf as highly indebted for thoſe more favorable diſtinctions to your truly well-informed and elegant mind: honored as I have been, and not leſs edified by your ſociety and confidence, while ſuch a circumſtance has not failed to ſting the pride of envious minds, it hath lifted me up at the ſame time above their reach, and ſecured to me the congratulations of good ones.

To

To the purity of your heart—to the firmneſs of your underſtanding, proſperity hath added her bleſſing, and rewarded you with a liberal fortune; but with you it is diſciplined ſo, as to be your ſervant, not your maſter.

To enjoy the *real* advantages of the country, you have lately withdrawn yourſelf from the capital, and though the circles of faſhion have reaſon to regret your abſence, yet they may receive ſuitable amends for it, by emulating *your* reſources and wiſely adopting your ideas of happineſs.

The village poor, more fortunately poor, where you reſide, may, in the report of your domeſtic excellencies, be taught, in a very pleaſing manner, the great and profitable duties of humility, contentment, and induſtry; with moſt fervent prayers to heaven, for its choiceſt bleſſings on you, as well here, as hereafter,

Allow me,

My very dear Madam,

With ſincere and unalterable affection,

To ſubſcribe myſelf,

Your truly grateful and faithful ſervant,

EDWARD BARRY.

Reading, Jan. 12, 1794.

PRE-

PRELIMINARY ADDRESS.

THE author of the following letters, when he directed them from his cure in the country, to a lady for whom he muſt ever feel the tendereſt regard, and exactly, in the ſame form, as they now appear, little expected at that time, that there ſhould have ſince occurred reaſons for making them public; but as they are irrelative to public animadverſion, and wholly

wholly of a private concern, he preſumes that he ſhall not be blamed for omitting to expreſs himſelf more largely on that head. The public have only to queſtion him, as to the production itſelf, and not the cauſe of it—and to their tribunal he again commits himſelf; if in general what he has now written, ſhall diſcover any uſefulneſs of thought, or aptneſs of expreſſion, he is not, under thoſe circumſtances, guilty of a preſent intruſion; but if, altogether devoid of ſuch apologies, for its appearance, the author, no doubt, will hear of it in proper time, and will not further treſpaſs, by ſending out, what at preſent

preſent he has in contemplation, a ſecond volume.

He begs to add, that as the letters are profeſſedly miſcellaneous, and in no way connected with each other, they may the better ſuit the purpoſes of accidental reading, by not wanting a reference to one letter, for the full explanation of another.

LET-

FAMILIAR LETTERS.

LETTER THE FIRST.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
Jan. 13, 1793.

Dear Madam,

YOU have often told me, that the poſtage of letters, in preference to all other taxes, is at once the moſt reaſonable, if not the moſt welcome. Whether this remark was intended to leſſen the objections of my

my frequent addreſſes to you, without the opportunity of franking them, I cannot pretend to ſay, but your obſervation was nevertheleſs ſtrictly juſt and natural: for when an intercourſe of ideas, perhaps the moſt tender and intereſting, is apparently cut off by diſtance, at which ſeaſon it uſually happens to be moſt coveted, the channel of the poſt-office becomes the friendly bearer of our wiſhes, and merely for the trifling charge of a few pence, ſpeeds, by night as well as day, through contending and oppreſſive elements, with its return of errand. The receipt of letters in ſuch a way as this, has ever appeared to me

me a luxury on miſer's terms; but a correſpondence with thoſe who in themſelves are as inſipid as the ſubjects they write about, is felt in the aggregate maſs not only as a coſt, but extremely troubleſome beſides. Of this deſcription are the generality of thoſe, who ſtand plighted to each other of keeping up what is termed a conſtant correſpondence. If the laviſhment of time, which might form the firſt feature of objection againſt ſo ridiculous a cuſtom, is not allowed the importance it ought to have, there are others, though of leſs weight, yet may have more influence.

If the greater part of ſuch letter writing was principally intended to improve the mind, it would, under certain reſtrictions, be a very laudable application of time: yet even then, it muſt be addreſſed to ſuch as have *leiſure*, *ability*, and *inclination*, faithfully to review and correct thoſe productions. But this very rarely happens: for minds of the ſame turn, and talents of nearly an equal poize, are uſually claſſed together, when, domeſtic occurrences, provincial tales, with a palatable daſh of defaming anecdote, readily preſent themſelves for diſſertation.

When

When theſe have had their day, and fulſome eulogy or lofty ſentiment can ſoar no higher; when invention begins to loſe its gaiety, and the pen crawls heavy on the paper, then it is, that diſappointments are hard at hand, and ſurely preſage that the *volcano* has *nearly burnt out itſelf*; or it may be, that chidings, apologies, umbrages and explanations linger on for a few poſts more, till at length the whole ſickens and pines away into lukewarmneſs, if not into ſlight; and *ſlight* too often cankers into enmity.

Many I have known, who at one time were mutually boſom friends, and in all probability would have ſtill continued ſo, had it not been for ſome of theſe miſhaps. But ſhould it be the good luck of a few to ſteer clear of theſe accidents, there are yet others to which they may be liable. When friends have been long ſeparated by diſtance and time, it is obſervable that, they are at that ſeaſon eſpecially prone to make mention of their individual attachments, in terms as extravagant as they are ſometimes *diſadvantageous*; and by frequent anticipations of the happy jubilee of a next meeting, although holding nothing

in

in reſerve for the tongue, but what the pen has more than previouſly communicated, they eſſentially weaken the ſpring of novelty and partly ſpoil the zeſt of interview: for after the congratulations of an embrace, and the report of viſage has on both ſides made its compliments, ſtrange as it may ſeem, there has not unfrequently appeared much awkward embarraſſment, even for a *ſucceeding thought!*

But in your ſociety, I can run no hazard of this ſort, and will therefore avail myſelf of the privilege you have allowed me, and addreſs you during my ſtay here at leaſt

once in every month. But detect me if you can, after the hint of laſt Thurſday, of beginning any one of my letters with the *firſt perſon ſingular*; for it is, as you then noticed, ſo common and ſo vulgar an exordium to epiſtles almoſt of every deſcription, that hereafter I will vigilantly keep back that ſelf-important puſhing pronoun, and cauſe ſome better word to take the lead.

When you can afford an interval of convenience, do not omit writing to me. It is now ſix weeks ago, ſince the poſtman, charged with your favour, announced

nounced his muſic at the door; let me intreat you not to puniſh me ſo again; and further I muſt deſire you either to leave a blank ſpace for the ſealing wax of your future letters, or otherwiſe to uſe leſs: for it has ſometimes happened, that through my eagerneſs to open a letter from you, I have torn a part of it, and have hence been, not a little perplexed, before I could make out the dependant word of a very charming ſentence.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE SECOND.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
Feb. 17, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THE curacy in which I am here engaged is on many accounts a deſirable one; to a ſportſman it might be additionally ſo. But poſſeſſing no one qualification for it myſelf,

myſelf, the birds, as well as the hares, will ſo far remain unmoleſted. I am promiſed however ſome of both in a few days, and when they are ſent to me, I have already written a direction where they are to travel further.

Of this little town itſelf there is nothing particular. There is indeed a fine river for freſh water fiſh, and the trout, ſo plentifully caught in it, are ſaid to be the moſt famous in England. If it were in my power to ſay concerning the people, that they are leſs inquiſitive, and not ſo much addicted to that *petty miſchievous* detraction

traction ſo notorious in theſe kind of places, I ſhould then indeed have ſomewhat very remarkable to acquaint you with: but that is not the caſe; for here it is all alive, and briſkly circulates from the matron to the maid, and from the clown to the eſquire; but let me take ſolemn heed how I write about eſquires, and eſpecially of thoſe who are called *country*: they are no trifling *things* believe me. For bear in your remembrance, that the mere *image* of a *golden calf* once cauſed the profoundeſt awe and worſhip from an ancient people. But to reaſon ſomewhat ſyllogiſtically on this point: the *thing* itſelf,

itſelf, it muſt be allowed on all ſides, is of more importance than the repreſentation of it; and our country eſquires, for the greater part, to do them juſtice, are not images, for they are *living creatures!*

Our church, at this place, is of gothic ſtructure, and rather more ſpacious and handſome than you might ſuppoſe.

We have two ſermons every Sunday, and prayers twice in the week beſides, as likewiſe on all ſaint days. My ſtipend is fifty pounds a year, out of which I am to pay twenty to a jolly baker, my landlord, for

for a ſitting room and bed-chamber; and it was no eaſy matter to get ſo well accommodated, and on ſuch eaſy terms: for this part of the country is in no one article ſo cheap as ſome might reaſonably imagine.

I have now preached here for theſe ſeveral Sundays laſt paſt, and in both parts of the day, was happy to obſerve a crowded congregation, which, it ſeems, had been quite otherwiſe for a long time before.

This information might ſavour of vanity to a mind leſs candid than your own. But

you

you will give me credit, I am ſure, that my only intention, by this curſory remark, was to notice, the gaping curioſity of the people to hear a *ſtranger!* When that is ſatiated, the complaint of a thin attendance may lie at *my* door; and therefore, for a conſiderable time to come, I will not report, even to you, what is *now* their opinion of me. Well convinced, that the *preſervation* of fame, if here, you will allow the application of that word, is with all deſcriptions of people, of more difficulty, and calls for *nicer management* than the acquiſition of it.

But ſome months hence, when my verdict is pronounced in the church-yard, where my auditors uſually reſort, and hold a *buzzing levee* after the ſervice *is over*, by that time, I can inform you with more certainty on this ſubject.

Yeſterday, I accepted, for the firſt time, an invitation to dine out; for to tell you the truth, among people, ſo much devoted to tale-bearing, as I have already told you theſe are, it is ſcarcely ſafe to commit oneſelf. For either through *ignorance* or *deſign*, converſation may be perverted; and unleſs to *congenial* natures, ſociety like this,

to

to ſpeak mildly, can never be pleaſant: therefore, where my duties as a clergyman do not interfere, I am reſolved to avoid them; for never will I eat a meal, at the price of another's character, even if I were not aware, that at the *ſame* table my own is liable to be cut up, for the very charming entertainment of the next day's gueſt. Nor for *bacon* and *eggs*, or a more coſtly dinner, will I ſubmit to be ſet up as a beacon in a ſorted company, where, by a variety of queſtions *ready* prepared, it is expected that, as the *only ſtranger* among them, I afford the gratification of giving a full, true and particular account of my

birth, my *connexions*, my *circumſtances*, and my *expectations*. All this, you ſay would be doing too much for it; and ſo ſay I likewiſe.

God bleſs you,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE THIRD.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
March 30, 1793.

Dear Madam,

ON my late visit to town, I made a purchase of those two books, you were so good to recommend to my attention, and since my return to this place, I have ga-

thered from their reſpective pages that improvement, which *your* approbation, and their *merits* could not fail to inſure: but even in thoſe authors, I was ſorry to remark an exceſſive propenſity to quotation, which, in minor ones, might be cenſured for pedantry: but then I am ſatisfied, that with theſe it originated from a degree of diffidence, and an anxiety to ſhew that their opinions were ſanctioned by writers of celebrity: in ſome doubtful points, this is both right and commendable; but in theorems, that are as ſelf-evident and as clear as the ſun at noon-day, to what purpoſe is this waſte of evidence?

If the uſefulneſs, or even the *literary* attainments of an author could in reality be ſhewn to more advantage by frequent recurrences to ancient or modern authorities, he deſerves not blame for doing ſo; and ſome there are, who may give him credit by theſe appearances for *learned* reſearch; but they are not aware, that a writer, even below *mediocrity*, may acquire the knowledge almoſt at any bookſeller's ſhop, of the moſt eminent authors on thoſe very ſubjects he may wiſh to introduce; and whether they are written in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, or in any other language, the beſt tranſlation of each is as readily known,

from

from whence may be collected, either wholeſale or retail, ſuch *appropriate* paſſages as may beſt ſeem to ſuit his purpoſe: and to this *deluſion* of diſcovering an intimacy with foreign languages, or elſe, of extenſive reading, is principally to be attributed thoſe frequent interruptions of quotation, ſometimes *totally inapplicable*, and *very ſeldom* neceſſary.

The aphoriſms of *learned* and *good* men, are juſtly to be held in reverence and admiration; but on *all* occaſions to lug in the dogmas of Greek and Roman authors, *be-*

cauſe

cauſe they are ancient, at once betrays a *prejudice*, and a *paucity* of underſtanding.

As models for compoſition, for many ages they have been greatly cried up: but the claſſic writers of our *own* country and of the preſent day, do not appear dim, even on a compariſon with their luſtre; and they indiſputably claim this preference to our attention, that they are *better underſtood*, and the ſubjects on which they treat, *every way concern us more*, not that the renowned claſſics, either of Greece, or of Rome, are intended by this remark, the ſmalleſt indignity, and while intrenched

as

as they ſo jealouſly are, by an *hoſt* of *pedagogues*, the attempt would be as *vain*, as their indignation would be *certain!*

If the knowledge of every language was not confeſſedly *mechanical*, and tied down to *poſitive* and unchangeable rules, I might now appear to be ſomewhat envious of thoſe who were ſkilled in them; or of thoſe, whoſe ſubſiſtence it was to *teach* them; but ſince theſe acquiſitions depend more on drudgery than on genius, I have the better chance of eſcaping ſuch a ſuſpicion.

A very

A very learned author hath aſſerted, that the ſame kind of application which is neceſſary to make a man an ingenious *mouſe-trap maker*, would make him a good ſcholar, or what, for general information, will be better defined, in ſaying, one who is expert in Greek and in Latin, for the phraſe *good ſcholar*, however *vulgarly miſunderſtood*, is, you well know, never meant to imply *more* than that. But I muſt now likewiſe enter my charge againſt thoſe who by a waſteful habit of quotation from many of our admired Engliſh writers, have *impoveriſhed* their richneſs and leſſened their *conſequence*. The Spectator has in this manner

ner been worn *thread bare*, and by this familiarity, the beauties of Sterne, muſt eventually loſe much of their novelty and attraction, nay, the unrivalled Junius himſelf, whoſe oracles at one time were ſo greedily embraced, to embelliſh the volume with a *title page*, and the tongue, with an elegancy of phraſe, have been too much hacknied either for preſent entertainment, or oſtentatious reference. To be conſtantly adverting to the works of others, is furthermore making the mind ſomewhat too dependant on their opinions, and very much enervating thoſe of our own. In our lucubrations, we ſhould aſpire

to

to be originals, and not mere copyiſts, and emulate to keep up for poſterity a ſucceſſion of our own ideas.

We ought not, I am perſuaded to be too ſervile to maxim and to method, but ſhould allow nature with fewer reſtraints to diſcloſe herſelf. For the Almighty and Gracious Author of it, we muſt never believe, is limited to the production of *only one* Newton, of *one* Milton, or of *one* Shakeſpear.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LETTER THE FOURTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
April 22, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THE phrenſy of political aſſociations, hath at length ſeized this inſignificant town. The market hall is beſpoken for that purpoſe, and a meeting to be directly called.

called. Quoth I to myſelf, on hearing it by mere accident; this at any rate, is a *rude*, if not a *raſh* determination: for though among you but in the capacity of a curate, yet as *repreſentative* of the incumbent, I ought to have been apprized of, if not conſulted, in every public tranſaction which concerns the happineſs and welfare of thoſe *committed to my charge*.

I therefore repaired to our chief magiſtrate, who is by calling a blackſmith, and addreſſed him nearly to the following effect:

"I underſtand, Sir, that a meeting, ſimilar to the numberleſs ones, recently held, is intended in this town;" yes, replied he, and I have promiſed for that occaſion the uſe of the hall: I expreſſed myſelf hurt that he had done ſo, and explained my reaſons for it.

I obſerved to him, that whatever the policy might be which firſt ſuggeſted thoſe aſſociations in populous cities and manufacturing towns, they became *perfectly burleſqued* when aped in ſuch a place as that.

The

The many ſuperior beauties of our conſtitution in church, as well as ſtate, I told him were juſtly to be admired; but that *deformities*, and *ugly ones* too, were notorious in both; *no man*, but he who was ſome way, or other, *dependant* on them could have the *effrontery* to deny: if therefore, the object of the meeting was to do the ſame as *others* had done before, and publiſh to the world a ſolemn adulation of *every* part of our conſtitution, without any *diſcrimination* or *reſerve whatever*, it completely did away every idea of preſent or *future* redreſs, and thus only ſerved to *exaſperate*, in a more violent degree thoſe

who thought and reaſoned *very much otherwiſe.*

Theſe were the objections, which as an individual I had a right to offer againſt ſuch a meeting on a political ſcore. But thoſe which directly pertained to my official character I enforced, as you may ſuppoſe, with *more earneſtneſs.*

As it was my duty, ſo I obſerved to him, it had been no leſs my practice, both in public and private, to promote the cauſe of peace and good neighbourhood; and that it would be both impolitic and unfair to kindle

kindle up ſuch a meeting, to provoke political diſcuſſions, and thus to ſcatter its *baneful* diſcord, over a little town happily *at preſent* untainted with it on either ſide.

In vain, ſaid I, are the pacifick precepts of the pulpit on one day, if thus to be *contumelioufly endangered* in your hall, on another.

This argument had its proper force, and he not "almoſt, but altogether," became a convert to it; and firmly aſſured me, that he would *revoke* the promiſe he had made, and with theſe remonſtrances he

he would approach the *eſquire*, who had ſo lately iſſued out *his mandamus* for "*the gathering together of the people.*"

The report of this determined viſit, I was to know on the ſucceeding day; and ſo I did: but ſuch was the prevailing *eloquence* of the eſquire, and truly *terrible* it muſt have been; for Felix yet trembled; while his maſter's high wrath at the intent of this errand, was but too viſible in the *diſmal* countenance of our honeſt, though *affrighted* magiſtrate!

And

And when he ſuggeſted to me, how materially it might *injure* him as a tradeſman, within the province of this *incenſed Tetrach*, if the hall was ſtill refuſed, I readily abſolved him from every obligation to me; but failed not the *more ſtrongly* to inculcate my objections on the minds of ſeveral of the *principal* pariſhioners: and the conſequence was briefly this; that on the day of meeting, made known by public advertiſement, and other *buſy* means, and which *better* and indiſpenſable avocations *would* not allow me to attend; that where

at

at leaſt a *hundred* people might have been expected, not *twenty* appeared!

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE FIFTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
May 30, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THE gentleman whoſe converſation you may remember to have been ſo much delighted with laſt ſummer, informed me by letter yeſterday, that he is very deſirous

of

of obtaining epiſcopal ordination, and will offer himſelf a candidate for it ſo ſoon as he can get qualified, by the uſual inſtruments of an approved title, a teſtimonial, and a Si Quis,* an examination he is not afraid of.

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* A "Si Quis" is the publication of the *candidate's* name and intentions, on three ſucceeding Sunday mornings, in his pariſh church, when thoſe who know any thing or have aught to alledge againſt his moral character, for three years *laſt paſt*, are publickly called upon to declare the ſame, that due notice of it may be tranſmitted to the biſhop.

You

You may poſſibly recollect that to your enquiries about him, I ſaid, that he was a cotemporary ſchool-fellow with me at a public grammar ſchool where he had received a very decent claſſical education, but was afterwards engaged with his father, with a view of ſucceeding to his extenſive buſineſs as an apothecary: but, that, from a variety of cauſes, he felt diſguſted with his ſituation; and the vaſt partiality which had grown with him from *infancy* to the profeſſion of a clergyman, had now determined him to abandon the *lucrative* proſpects of phyſic, though it were only for the ſcanty income of a cu-

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meeting with *ma*
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the tuition of a b
clergyman; he ac
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afterwards comple
London, disposed tw
resided, to report
university in Scot
degree of doctor
been unanimously

greedineſs of filthy lucre" could
caſe have held out any temp-
his preference: and though
ith *many checks* by the way,
been diſcouraged from devot-
d to preparatory ſtudies, under
of a beneficed and very able
; he acquaints me, that his me-
ledge firſt taught at home; but
completed in that *great ſeminary*
poſed two phyſicians where he
report theſe attainments to a
in Scotland, from whence the
doctor in medicine has lately
imouſly conferred on him; as

an

every candidate for orders to read a chapter out of the *Bible*, as a *part* of his examination, and to reject ſuch a one as could *not* acquit himſelf in this reſpect, in a *judicious*, *articulate*, and *ſonorous* manner; for what, ſays this author, is mere Latin and Greek, without ſo important a qualification? It is like, rejoins he, a man, who having in his poſſeſſion a parcel of old coins, is yet without a ſingle ſixpence of current money.

Excuſe my prolixity in thus introducing the cauſe of my friend; and I muſt ſtill call upon your patience to bear with me

in

in ſome other curſory remarks, which I ſhall beg to offer on this occaſion; they may the better enable you, if opportunity ſhould ſo happen, to befriend his wiſhes, among your clerical acquaintance; and perhaps I need not intimate to you, that better hopes of ſucceſs are to be entertained in applications of this nature, among the *truly good*, than thoſe of a *different* deſcription.

Worthy men are ever foremoſt to make the moſt tender apologies for human indiſcretion; there is uſually, a very great portion of *openneſs* and *ready good-nature*

adorning their hearts: while in characters *leſs* remarkable for amiableneſs and piety, the ſtern oppoſition of an *affectedly* nice conſcience is generally to be expected.

From men of *this* caſt, you are likely to be told, in the ſervice of my friend, that inaſmuch, as he was not graduated either at *Oxford*, or at *Cambridge*; that he is not, according to the *cant phraſe*, a regular bred man; no matter at all, for being regularly baptized and bred a *Chriſtian*, this it ſeems, has nothing to do with regular breeding to the church: he ought forſooth, at leaſt for a certain number of trotting

trotting terms, to have been inflated with the *necromantick air* of one of theſe places, and then he would have been regularly bred to *any* thing, or as regularly bred to *nothing* at all. Let me here obſerve, that not to theſe *regular* noun ſubſtantive kind of men, is the world indebted for the *moſt enlightened diſcoveries* in medicine, neither for many of our truly eminent learned divines, nor for ſome of our luminaries in the law.

But, returning to our ſacerdotal candidate, I muſt beg to apprize you, that his gradu-

graduation at *Scotland*, will very little further his wiſhes, and with a certain *narrow-minded* ſet of men, will rather expoſe him to jeer and inſult, than otherwiſe.

The poor northern univerſities you muſt know, are charged with having conferred their academic honors on very diſqualified and ignorant men; they plead *guilty* to that charge, and offer this *apology* for it, that in the recommendation of *ſome* of the candidates to their favor, they have been moſt *groſsly deceived* and *impoſed* on, and againſt which they are at length become more cautious. But do the ſeminaries of

Scotland

Scotland ſtand ſingle in this offence?* I trow not. Can they not likewiſe *recriminate* againſt Oxford as well as Cambridge? Are the graduates which annually *teem* from their *pious* walls, are they *all*, or even the

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* Dr. Knox, formerly fellow of St. John's college, Oxford, and author of ſome juſtly admired eſſays, diſcloſes in one of them the mighty merit neceſſary to obtain a degree at Oxford, which, for the ſake of fairneſs and information ſhall *here* be literally tranſcribed.

" On

the *majority* of them men of *good morals*, and of ſound learning? If in truth they are,

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" *On ſome parts of the Diſcipline in our Engliſh Univerſities.*

" Our Engliſh univerſities are held in high eſteem among foreigners; and, indeed, conſidering the number of great men, who have received a part of their education in them, and their opulent eſtabliſhments of colleges and profeſſorſhips, they are really reſpectable. I have therefore been the more diſpoſed to lament, that the public exerciſes ſhould be ſo futile and abſurd, as to deſerve not only the ſeverity of cenſure, but the utmoſt poignancy of ridicule.

" Reve-

are, the kingdom, it muſt be owned, *ſwarms* with exalted characters! But if, perad-

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" Reverence, it has been juſtly remarked, is always increaſed by the diſtance of the object. The world at large, who hear of colleges like palaces devoted to learning, of princely eſtates bequeathed for the ſupport of profeſſors, of public libraries and ſchools for every ſcience, are diſpoſed to view the conſecrated place in which they abound with peculiar veneration. Accidental viſitors alſo, who behold the ſuperb dining halls, the painted chapels, the luxurious common rooms, the elegant chambers, and a race of mortals, in a peculiar dreſs, ſtrutting through the ſtreets with a ſolemn

peradventure, it proves otherwiſe, and what a *petty* examination for *holy orders* has

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a ſolemn air of importance; when they ſee all the doctors, both the proctors, with all the heads of colleges and halls, in ſolemn proceſſion, with their velvet ſleeves, ſcarlet gowns, hoods, black, red, and purple —cannot but be ſtruck with the appearance, and are led to conclude, that here, at length, wiſdom, ſcience, learning, and whatever elſe is praiſeworthy. for ever flouriſh and abound.

" Without entering into an invidious and particular examination of the ſubject, we may curſorily obſerve,

has now, and then, evinced; it is equally certain, that even *their* degrees are *too often* profti-

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ſerve, that after all this pompous oſtentation, and this profuſe expence, the public has not, of late at leaſt, been indebted for the greateſt improvements in ſcience and learning, to all the doctors, both the proctors, nor to all the heads of colleges and halls laid together. That populous univerſity, London, and that region of literary labour, Scotland, have ſeized every palm of literary honour, and left the ſons of Oxford and Cambridge to enjoy ſubſtantial comforts, in the ſmoke of the common or combination room. The burſar's books are the only manuſcripts

proſtituted to the moſt *pitiable ignorance*, as well as *vulgarity*.

The

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of any value produced in many colleges; and the ſweets of penſions, exhibitions, fines, fellowſhips, and petty offices, the chief objects of academical purſuit.

" If I were to enter into the many laughable abſurdities of collegiate life and univerſity inſtitutions, as they now ſtand, I ſhould exceed the limits of my paper. It is my intention at preſent only to acquaint the public with the exerciſes, which one celebrated ſeat of the Muſes requires, of thoſe who ſeek the envied

The *mere pretext* of having undergone the uſual ceremonies of graduation, is indeed

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vied honour of a maſter of arts degree. I ſpeak not from diſpleaſure or reſentment; but voluntarily incur the odium of many perſons attached by intereſt and connections to the univerſities, with no other motive than the deſire of removing the diſgrace of thoſe noble eſtabliſhments, by expoſing the futility of the exerciſes to public animadverſion.

" The youth, whoſe heart pants for the honour of a bachelor of arts degree, muſt wait patiently till near four years have revolved. But this time is not

deed but of itſelf a very *ſilly* argument of ſuperiority, to that, which has been acquired

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to be ſpent idly. No; he is obliged, during this period, once to oppoſe, and once to reſpond, in diſputations held in the public ſchools, a formidable ſound, and a dreadful idea; but, on cloſer attention, the fear will vaniſh, and contempt ſupply its place.

" This oppoſing and reſponding is termed, in the cant of the place, *doing generals*. Two boys, or men, as they call themſelves, agree to *do generals* together. The firſt ſtep in this mighty work is to procure arguments. Theſe are always handed down, from

quired without it: but even in this reſpect, the inſtallation of a new chancellor at both theſe

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from generation to generation on long ſlips of paper; and conſiſt of fooliſh ſyllogiſms on fooliſh ſubjects, of the formation or the ſignification of which, the reſpondent and opponent ſeldom know more than an infant in ſwaddling clothes. The next ſtep is to go for a *liceat* to one of the petty officers, called the regent-maſter of the ſchools, who ſubſcribes his name to the queſtions, and receives ſixpence as his fee. When the important day arrives, the two doughty diſputants go into a large duſty room full of dirt and cobwebs, with walls and wainſcot decorated with

theſe *famous* ſeminaries is known to have fluſhed out on the public as large a covey of

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the names of former diſputants, who to divert the tedious hours, cut out their names with their penknives, or write verſes with a pencil. Here they ſit in mean deſks, oppoſite to each other, from one o'clock till three. Not once in a hundred times does any officer enter; and, if he does, he hears one ſyllogiſm or two, and then makes a bow, and departs, as he came and remained, in ſolemn ſilence. The diſputants then return to the amuſement of cutting the deſks, carving their names, or reading Sterne's Sentimental Journey, or ſome other edifying novel. When this exerciſe

of *off hand, ready-made* doctors as perhaps were ever dubbed at *one* time by the diplomatic

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ciſe is duly performed by both parties, they have a right to the title and inſignia of *Soph*s; but not before they have been formally *created* by one of the regent-maſters, before whom they kneel, while he lays a volume of Ariſtotle's works on their heads, and puts on a hood, a piece of black crape, hanging from their necks, down to their heels; which crape, it is expreſsly ordained by a ſtatute in this caſe made and provided, ſhall be plain, and unadorned either with wool or with fur.

" The

lomatic ſeals either of *St. Andrews* or *Aberdeen!*

Nor

" The next exerciſe is called *doing juraments*, which conſiſts of juſt ſtepping into the ſchool and *propoſing one ſyllogiſm*, for the ſake of complying with the *letter of the ſtatute*; and this *noble* exerciſe is termed *doing juraments*, which, being interpreted, ſignifies *the evading of one's oath.*

" And this work done, a great progreſs is made towards the wiſhed-for honour of a bachelor's degree. There remain only one or two trifling forms, and another diſputation almoſt exactly ſimilar to *doing ge-*

nerals,

Nor are theſe laſt degrees leſs meritorious becauſe ſold at a *cheaper price* than at many

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nerals, but called *anſwering under bachelor*, previous to the awful examination.

" Every candidate is obliged to be examined in the whole circle of the ſciences by three maſters of arts, *of his own choice*. The examination is to be held in one of the public ſchools, and to continue from nine o'clock till eleven. The maſters take a moſt ſolemn oath, that they will examine properly and impartially. Dreadful as all this appears, there is always found to be more of appearance in it than reality; for the greateſt

many other places; for it ſhould be remembered, that thoſe ſeminaries had not the

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greateſt dunce uſually gets his *teſtimonium* ſigned with as much eaſe and credit as the fineſt genius. The manner of proceeding is as follows: the poor young man to be examined in the ſciences often knows no more of them than his bedmaker, and the maſters who examine are ſometimes equally unacquainted with ſuch myſteries. But *ſchemes*, as they are called, or little books, containing forty or fifty queſtions in each ſcience, are handed down, from age to age, from one to another. The candidate to be examined employs three or four days in learning theſe by heart, and the examiners,

the good luck to meet with ſo many *rich* benefactors to *ſupport* the different profeſſors

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examiners, having done the ſame before him when they were examined, know what queſtions to aſk; and ſo all goes on ſmoothly. When the candidate has diſplayed his univerſal knowledge of the ſciences, he is to diſplay his ſkill in philology. One of the maſters, therefore, deſires him to conſtrue a paſſage in ſome Greek or Latin claſſic, which he does with no interruption, juſt as he pleaſes, and as well as he can. The ſtatutes next require, that he ſhould tranſlate familiar Engliſh phraſes into Latin. And now is the time when the maſters ſhew their wit and jocularity.

Droll

feſſors as both the Engliſh ones have had. The northern univerſities ſell a great deal at

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Droll queſtions are put on any ſubject, and the puzzled candidate furniſhes diverſion by his awkward embarraſſment. I have known the queſtions on this occaſion to conſiſt of an enquiry into the pedigree of a race-horſe. And it is a common queſtion, after aſking what is the *ſummum bonum* of various ſects of philoſophers, to aſk what is the *ſummum bonum*, or chief good, among Oxonians; to which the anſwer is ſuch as Mimnermus would give. This familiarity, however, only takes place when the examiners are pot-companions of the candidate, which indeed is uſually the

at a time, it is granted, for *ready* money; others, which have *more* wealth locked up in

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the caſe; for it is reckoned good management to get acquainted with two or three jolly young maſters of arts, and ſupply them well with port, previouſly to the examination. If the vice-chancellor and proctors happen to enter the ſchool, a very uncommon event, then a little ſolemnity is put on, very much to the confuſion of the maſters, as well as of the boy, who is ſitting in the little box oppoſite to them. As neither the officer, nor any one elſe, uſually enters the room (for it is reckoned very *ungenteel*), the examiners and the candidates often converſe on the laſt drinking-

in their coffers, can afford to give a longer credit! But degrees or titles of any *other* found

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bout, or on horſes, or read the newſpaper, or a novel, or divert themſelves as well as they can in any manner, till the clock ſtrikes eleven, when all parties deſcend, and the *teſtimonium* is ſigned by the maſters. With this *teſtimonium* in his poſſeſſion, the candidate is ſure of ſucceſs. The day in which the honour is to be conferred arrives; he appears in the Convocation-houſe, he takes an abundance of oaths, pays a ſum of money in fees, and, after kneeling down before the vice-chancellor, and whiſpering a lie, riſes up a bachelor of arts.

" And

ſound or name ſhould not be ſuffered to be within the graſp either of *intereſt* or of *gold*.

" And now, if he aſpires at higher honours, (and what emulous ſpirit can ſit down without aſpiring at them?) new labours and new difficulties are to be encountered during the ſpace of three years. He muſt *determine* in Lent, he muſt *do quodlibets*, he muſt *do auſtins*, he muſt declaim twice, he muſt read ſix ſolemn lectures, and he muſt be again examined in the ſciences, before he can be promoted to the degree of maſter of arts.

gold. The admired Cicero ſays, " that honor is the reward of virtue, and he that aſpires

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" None but the initiated can know what *determining*, *doing quodlibets*, and *doing auſtins* mean. I have not room to enter into a minute deſcription of ſuch contemptible *minutiæ*. Let it be ſufficient to ſay, that theſe exerciſes conſiſt of diſputations, and the diſputations of ſyllogiſms, procured and uttered nearly in the ſame places, time, and manner, as we have already ſeen them in *doing generals*. There is, however, a great deal of trouble in little formalities, ſuch as procuring ſixpenny *liceats*, ſticking up the names on the walls, ſitting in large empty rooms by yourſelf, or with

aſpires to it, muſt come in by that way;" and which the Romans repreſented by building

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ſome poor wight as ill employed as yourſelf, without any thing to ſay or do, wearing hoods, and a little piece of lambſkin with the wool on it, and a variety of other particulars too tedious and too trifling to enumerate.

" The declamations would be an uſeful exerciſe, if it were not always performed in a careleſs and evaſive manner. The lectures are always called *Wall* Lectures, becauſe the lecturer has no other audience but the walls. Indeed, he uſually ſteals a ſheet or

building the temple of Honor in ſuch a way, that there was *no admiſſion* into it, without firſt paſſing through the temple of *Virtue*.

Beſides

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two of Latin out of ſome old book, no matter on what ſubject, though it ought to be on natural philoſophy. Theſe he keeps in his pocket, in order to take them out and read away, if a proctor ſhould come in; but, otherwiſe, he ſits by himſelf, and ſolaces himſelf with a book, not from the Bodleian but the circulating library.

" The examination is performed exactly in the ſame manner as before deſcribed; and though repreſented

Beſides to what purpoſe is the fooliſh boaſt of ſaying, " I received an *expenſive* educa-

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ſented as very formidable, is ſuch a one as a boy from a good ſchool juſt entered, might go through as well as after a ſeven years reſidence. Few however reſide; for the majority are what are called *term-trotters*, that is, perſons who only keep the terms for form-ſake, or ſpend ſix or eight weeks in a year in the univerſity, to qualify them for degrees, according to the letter of the ſtatutes.

" After all theſe important exerciſes and trials, and after again taking oaths by wholeſale, and paying the

education," unleſs to provoke a reply to this effect: Sir, I doubt not but that your parents

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the fees, the academic is honoured with a maſter's degree, and ſallies forth into the world with this undeniable paſſport to carry him through it with credit.

" Exerciſes of a nature equally ſilly and obſolete, are performed, in a ſimilar manner, for the other degrees; but I have neither time nor patience to enter into the detail.

" And now I ſeriouſly repeat, that what I have ſaid proceeds from no other motive than a wiſh to ſee the

parents *paid* a *conſiderable price* for what you appear to have *never received*. But the fact

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the glory of the univerſities unſullied by the diſgrace of requiring, with ridiculous ſolemnity, a ſet of childiſh and uſeleſs exerciſes. They raiſe no emulation, they confer no honour, they promote no improvement. They give a great deal of trouble, they waſte much time, and they render the univerſity contemptible to its own members. I have the honour, ſuch as it is, to be a member of the univerſity of Oxford, and a maſter of arts in it. I know the advantages of the place; but I alſo know its more numerous and weighty diſadvantages; and the confidence the public has

fact is, that the expences of an education, ſuch as it is, whether at Oxford or at Cambridge,

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has already placed in me, makes it a duty to inform them of every thing, in which the general ſtate of morals and literature is greatly concerned. I have done this duty; nor ſhall I regard the unjuſt diſpleaſure of all the doctors, both the proctors, nor of all the heads of colleges and halls, with their reſpective ſocieties.

" As to the imprudence of this undertaking," to uſe the words of an able but unfortunate writer, " I " confeſs it to be ſuch, and that I have all along pro-

" ceeded

Cambridge, may be managed in all reſpects, full *as cheap*, and in ſome inſtances much

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" ceeded without a ſingle view to my own intereſt,
" without any promiſe or expectation of the ſmalleſt
" reward, even that of being preſented to a doctor's
" degree by the univerſity, in return for all my induſ-
" try, and the pains which I have taken in its behalf.

" The worldly wiſe, and the prudent of this gene-
" ration, conſider things only as they reſpect their
" temporal intereſt and advantage, without any re-
" gard to right or wrong, truth or falſehood, any
" further than they conduce to their corrupt purpoſes
" and

much *cheaper*, than one received by *private* and *reſpectable* tutorage; * but as *ſhew* for the

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" and ſelfiſh aims. But it is the part of a ſcholar " and an honeſt man to conſider things intrin- " ſically, and to make truth, reaſon, and equity, the " ſtandards of all his determinations."

Eſſay lxxvii, *vol.* 1.

* Dr. Knox, in his hints to thoſe who are deſigned for orders, vol. 1, eſſay 18, obſerves, " With reſpect to a voluntary reſidence at either univerſity during ſix or eight months at a time, though certainly right, if

the money, is with the *middling* ranks of people eſpecially, a prevailing temptation, they will naturally ſend their children to the former. But learning, whether acquired

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if a reformation ſhould take place, I conſider it, in their preſent ſtate, as dangerous, expenſive, and attended with no advantage great enough to compenſate the diſadvantage, and which may not be enjoyed abundantly better in the family of a worthy and learned clergyman in a country village. By all means let the long intervals be employed in ſtudy, for which the ſilence of a village retreat, if a ſufficient number of books are to be procured, is far better accommo-

quired in the vatican or in the garret, is alike learning.

A guinea earned at St. Giles's is of equal value to one that is earned at St. James's:

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dated than the ſociety of noiſy young men, who are ſuffered to do as they pleaſe by night and by day; who are above controul; and who cauſe the college to reſemble the tavern and the brothel. I have no cauſe to expreſs myſelf with reſentment on the ſubject of the univerſities. I ſay what I think, and I ſay it becauſe it would ill become me to conceal any thing, in the knowledge of which ingenuous youth is greatly intereſted.

away

away then, ſay I, with all the prejudices and pedantry about *college* and *college*, as though the name of college, like the *ſhelter* of *piety* to the *hypocrite*, was to gloſs over the *infirmities of the head!*

Degrees *however* conferred, or from whatſoever quarter they come, or *coſt* whatever they may, can never do *honor* to the man, if the man has not *capacity* to do honor to the *degree!* Put it to this iſſue, and here let all the graduates of *England*, *Ireland*, *Scotland*, and all the ſeminaries on earth, moſt *laudably* contend for ſuperiority! But after all that I have

ſaid on this point; an *academick* honor, and *epiſcopal* ordination, are no way connected. Many as I have already obſerved who have been admitted to the former, have been found incompetent to the latter.

It is true, that they who travel into orders either from choice or convenience, through a different road than that of one of the Engliſh ſeminaries, uſually undergo a ſtricter examination, and pay in that kind of way a double toll: and it looks very much like ill-nature to reproach them afterwards, as ſome do, with "*climbing* into the church;" a term, at any rate, not

very

very complimentary to the *ordaining biſhop*, to whoſe *vigilance* and *diſcernment* the *fitneſs* of every candidate for ordination is *ſeriouſly* intruſted. But allowing this phraſe to be a *witty* one, ſtill it cannot be denied but that more fame is due to the man who *actively climbs* than to him who *regularly crawls!* But theſe petty bickerings now apart! We will ſuppoſe them both to be ſafely landed and are entered on their reſpective duties in the houſe of God. Here *deluſion* ends! The congregation will now diſcover, by their reſpective exertions which of the two moſt *intruded* himſelf into the miniſterial office. But I muſt beg to whiſ-

per a word more to that perſon, who is ſo oſtentatious [a ſtickler for fair and *rigid* forms.

The title or nomination to a cure, ſcarcely without which any candidate can be ordained, I will take the liberty of aſking him, if that which *he* preſented to the biſhop was in *all* reſpects a *fair* and an honeſt one, or was it an *accommodating fictitious* title? Let the *majority* of thoſe who have been ordained, anſwer the former in the affirmative if *they can*; but if in their *conſciences*, and on their *oaths*, they *dare not be ſo raſh*; they are eſpecially bounden

bounden of all men for ever to hold their peace. Modeſty ſhould ſtrike dumb their tongues, who have obtained ordination by means ſo palpably *fradulent!* It ill becomes thoſe " to ſtrain at gnats who can ſwallow *camels!*"

You ſee, that I have written to you an unuſual long letter, and though the greater part of it, may be irrelative to the purpoſes of private correſpondence, yet I could not forbear to deliver my mind, thus unreſervedly, on a ſubject, where, beſides ſerving my friend, I feel ſo much intereſted in myſelf.

And

To your good offices allow me once more to recommend him: I am ſenſible that you ſtood in need of no artillery from me to fight his battle with, and am equally ſure, that no further perſuaſion, is neceſſary to engage you in it.

God bleſs you,

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET

LETTER THE SIXTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
June 10, 1793.

Dear Madam,

A Solicitation from the Grand Lodge of Ancient Maſons, to preach before them on next St. John's Day, in my official character as chaplain to that ſociety, will call

call me to London early in the next week. It was a text of your own chooſing that I laſt addreſſed them from, and the credit then given to *my* judgment for ſo appropriate a ſelection encourages me, to apply to you for another; and if ſuch a portion ſhould not *immediately* occur, I am ſure of not waiting longer for it than a ſucceeding poſt, if you *now* happen to be at home, and are diſpoſed to give it a thought.

When cloiſtered within our own myſterious walls, we delight you know in ſecrets; but in the *houſe of God*, we ſcruple not to divulge to all the world, the materials, from whence

whence thoſe *very ſecrets* are extracted, and it is only the judicious combination of theſe, which makes the foundation ſtone of maſonry, which like to any other *ſcience* can only be known progreſſively. But although you are not taught in the letter, yet a heart formed like unto *your own* is ever inſpired with its principles. And for as much as in the nature of things, it cannot well be otherwiſe, but improper characters muſt *ſometimes* be admitted into the order, yet the inſtitution, modelled as it is, after our moſt holy religion, does not *ſtand* or *fall* on the *precarious* conduct of her moſt profeſſed admirers.

Had

Had maſonry been only the invention of a day, or the introduction of *faſhion* and *caprice* we muſt long ago have expected, that like unto thoſe, " it would dwindle and die away, and like the baſeleſs fabrick of a viſion leave not a wreck behind." But ſo far as this order can be traced, as it almoſt began with, ſo it is known *all* over the world. It is venerable by *antiquity*, dignified by its *principles*, and admired for its *univerſal benevolence*: it knows no *party*, has no preference to ſect or country, but like the glorious ſun from heaven, ſends *light* and *ſuccour* to all around!

The

The departure of the poſt is too near at hand to write more, and on this ſubject, I imagine you to ſay, *enough* is already written.

Give me credit for the truth of every word of it, and allow me to remain

Sincerely your's,

EDWARD BARRY.

LETTER THE SEVENTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
July 30, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THERE is ſcarcely any thing which more affects my nerves, than the ſight of a corpſe! and from ſo doleful an exhibition I am juſt liberated; you muſt expect therefore

therefore that the language of this letter will ſavour of the gloomy poſture of my mind: but I know that ſuch contemplations are far from being unwelcome to your own.

To write any thing *new* on the ſubject of death is impoſſible; for there is ſcarcely a thought which relates to it, but has been ſelected, to ſet forth, in a *variety* of ways, either the ſagacity of the philoſopher, or the eloquence of the moraliſt; but the *ſpectacle itſelf*, while looking as it were with *ſtern mockery* at the conjectures of the firſt, grins with ſullen diſdain at the prat-

tling of the laſt, and with a peculiar *irony* of *viſage*, ſteals upon the imagination, and ſeemingly thus addreſſes it:

" *I have given you all the ſlip.*"

" *I am now in the ſecret, and will not blab it.*"

" *I leave you to your gueſſes.*"

Theſe, or ſomewhat like theſe, have ever been the workings of my mind; whenever I have yielded to the ſolicitations of "*ſtepping up ſtairs*," and ſeeing what

is

is uſually called a *pleaſant* or a *ſmiling corpſe!* It hath frequently fallen to my lot to view the latter, but my mind, without one exception, was always impreſſed with the *reverſe* of the former: to *me* ſuch ſmiles look like *grimace*, and are unnatural; nor are they at all *bettered*, by the well tapered and coſtly winding ſheet, or when he who wears it, is caparifoned out for the grave, with the proudeſt *embelliſhments* of a coffin, and the *ruffled* trappings of a ſhroud!

And

And ſince my ſpirits by an aſſociation of ideas have always been made to ſuffer through ſuch appearances, it is my determination to avoid them for the future; but that I may not altogether fail of giving ſome energy to the momentous theme I have brought forward, allow me to adopt, on this occaſion, by way of a concluding dirge, thoſe grand ideas of Shakeſpear, which you acquainted me, were the favorite gloomy quotations of the late Dr. Johnſon, when he ruminated on the conſequences of death!

Ay!

" Ay! But to die and go we know not where,
" To lie in cold oblivion and to rot!
" This ſenſible warm motion
" To become a kneaded clod!
" And the delighted ſpirit
" To bathe in fiery floods!"

By turning from the enquiry of death, we do but add to the *ſervile* horrors of it, againſt which, there is only one *ſafe* preſcription: it is not to be found among the *noſtrums* of infidelity! But it is regiſtered in the *ſure* and *reconciling* pages of the Chriſtian Faith!

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE EIGHTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
August 30, 1793.

Dear Madam,

EXCEPTING the produce of hay and corn, the barrenneſs of the land, in which it is my lot to be caſt, will not afford a ſcrap

ſcrap of information or entertainment that is worth ſending to you.

The moving world is however replete with both, and daily preſents the imagination with ſomething new. But it is not novelty that I am now beſpeaking your attention to; for female exceſſes, ſuch as I have juſt been reading of in the diurnal prints, are become it ſeems, too familiar to the eye for that.

The reputation of *ſome* characters altogether depends, on *decent* and *becoming* manners, and in keeping what is uſually called

called "*good hours*;" but midnight orgies, maſquerades, gambling, archery, and charioteerings, are paragraphed away to the public in vaſt abundance, as the delicate amuſements of our chaſte and titled fair! And why the practice of duelling, which their conduct ſo notoriouſly promotes, ſhould for ſo long a time have been monopolized by *men only*, is a matter of much aſtoniſhment! It is ſurely becauſe that ſome of our *amazonian* ladies who preſide over faſhion, and determine the maxims of *others*, have not as yet given it a thought, and ſet it a going; with much propriety might it be introduced by thoſe, among them

as

as are famed for their adroitneſs with the warlike *bow* and *arrow!* Such, in my opinion, are equally eligible to the rencounters of the piſtol, and the ſword itſelf, wielded about in their lilly hands, might ſeem to point to the vital ſtream with *additional beauty!* And ſince duelling is an affair, confeſſedly of ſuch nice *honor*, it is rather ſingular that women, who are ſo properly tenacious of *their rights*, have not hitherto put in their claims for that.

They might then have the ſatisfaction of either becoming the avengers of their own honor, or elſe the reſponſible agents of

of their own *diſhonor*; the unoffending life of the huſband, brother, friend, and ſtranger, would under theſe circumſtances be very ſeldom called upon.

For female captiouſneſs and *intrigue* would be leſs *ſuſceptible* and leſs *at work*, if theſe were not ſuffered to be atoned for by *proxy*.

Nor would the fatal traps of duelling be ſo often ſet, if none but the *principals* themſelves were allowed to expiate the charge of offence.

But

But on this ſubject pray indulge me with your opinion.

Your's as uſual,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE NINTH.

BRISTOL, Oct. 1, 1793.

Dear Madam,

AS there is ſeldom any perſon ſo univerſally beloved, as to be exempt from *enemies*, ſo on the other hand, it but rarely happens, that there is a man to be found

ſo

ſo generally hated but what has ſome *friends*. Hence it is, that of every character two different reports may be given, and for that reaſon I cannot at this time ſend you any ſatisfactory account of the perſon you told me, when I reached this place, to make ſome enquiries about.

My opinion ſhall be ſuſpended for the moſt *impartial* teſtimony of both ſides, which I ſhall be aſſiduous to learn, and it ſhall be then directly communicated to you. A determined enemy, I am too much afraid, frequently has it in his power to do more effectual miſchief than treble

that number of the moſt zealous friends can repair, perhaps during their whole lives!

We enroll in the book of life with *caution* and with *ſcrutiny*, thoſe who are candidates for a *good* name, but regiſter on much eaſier terms the qualifications of ſuch as are to wear a *bad* one! It is ſeriouſly to be regretted, that the variety of treatiſes which already have been publiſhed to the world on ſo illiberal a diſpoſition, as the laſt is, cannot boaſt of a *proportional ſhare* of ſucceſs with other moral attempts: From that celebrated comedy, " the School

for

for Scandal," one might reaſonably have hoped, in this reſpect, the moſt happy effects; but alas! like unto the wholeſome lectures of the pulpit, the admiration given, ſeldom ſurvives the performance.

A propenſity to defamation, whether in man or woman, in contradiſtinction to other *immoralities*, is one of the moſt *inveterate* diſeaſes of the human heart, and is furthermore, the infallible criterion of a *ſcurvy*, and malicious one. And if this itchy diſeaſe be not thoroughly cleanſed from the mind before it reaches the *talkative* and *grimalkin* age, the cure then be-

comes *deſperate*; but if *unfortunately* the malady ſhould be combined with *idleneſs*, and a *pretence to religion*, it is, all the world to nothing, a *loſt caſe!*

The mind cannot be *inactive*; it *muſt* be employed ſomehow, and as a departed prelate once obſerved on another occaſion to a queen of England, if it is not engaged in *good* actions, the devil will employ it in *bad* ones!

Is it not extraordinary, my dear Madam, that characters which ought to feel a *little ſore* and *tender* themſelves, are almoſt

almoſt ever notoriouſly unmerciful to others, and in this *deteſtable vice* are among the moſt daring and the moſt adroit? Or as the adage ſhortly ſpeaks it, " the greateſt rogue uſually cries out rogue firſt:" ſo that the detracter, by firſt accuſing the character of another, reſorts to the ſame ſhelter for the *ſafety* of his own, as the villain who turns *king's evidence* in hopes of ſaving his own neck.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE TENTH.

HUNGERFORD, BERKS,
Nov. 28, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THE revolution of another year, which by the almanack of my life terminated on the ſeventeenth of this month, has brought me ſafe to the half-way houſe of three ſcore years and ten! And with *real ſincerity* do

do I thank God, if not hereafter too ſtrictly ſcrutinized about the application of it, that ſo great an advance of time is already placed to my account; and except only for that latter portion of it, which made me acquainted with you, there is not, in my remembrance, a ſingle day of any other comfort, for which I would agree to be put back, and if it were poſſible to ſee again.

You may perhaps infer from this remark, that the current of events has not gone along ſo ſmoothly with me, as with many others, and that I am therefore thus expreſſing

expreſſing my mind under the influence of prejudice and diſlike: your concluſion is not altogether a wrong one; but if human happineſs could be leſs interrupted than what it *really* is, or even more *extenſive*, than the faireſt poſſeſſors *find* it to be; if any dependance can be placed on obſervation and reaſoning principles, I ſhould in ſuch a caſe, neither deplore the years that were paſt, nor reckon on thoſe which might come.

For the bare conviction alone, that every year was the fleeting *decay* of youth, and that age, however comfortable otherwiſe,

was

was daily beſet with traps of *pain* and *diſ-ſolution*, would be to me what the hand writing againſt the wall was to the troubled Belſhazzar!

Enviable truly is rather that man who is in the act of pulling off ſuch armour, than he who is *putting* it on. For with the firſt the *pitiableneſs* of childhood is paſt, the diſcipline of the boy is finiſhed, youth and middle life have mounted their proudeſt climax, and battled through the various ordeals of both, till at length it has become their turn to deſcend and ſuffer

ſuffer all the diſquietude and chagrins of querulous old age: yes, chagrins of old age I am *grieved* to call it.

Even the *furrowed* nurſe herſelf, to awe the babe, will in ſome way or other introduce the word *old*, either as a reproach or a bugbear; and the proud cautions of the mother againſt *looking old*, are among ſome of the firſt inſtructions to which the child will liſten.

It is not to be wondered at therefore, that with rudiments ſuch as theſe, we go on from *infancy*, to diſlike the *ſound* of age, and

and in our progreſſive advances in it, to have recourſe to invention, to ſhun and *evade* the charge when we feel *conſcious* of *deſerving* it.

From fifteen even to three ſcore, we are very adroit to parry off the addreſs of time, and refer him to ſome one *older*; but when diſguiſe will ſerve no longer, and having ruſted out a few years more, it is then only, with ſome reluctance and reſerve, that we give in our names to the liſt of antiquity!

And at *this period*, where courteous and reſpectful attention ought chiefly to *begin*,

to the diſhonor of the youth of *both* ſexes, it too often moſt unfeelingly ends, and the aged diſtreſſingly complain of this! Good manners and humanity, I am very certain, enjoin a more becoming demeanour to them: ſuch invariably is *your* conduct, and it ſhall be ever *mine*. We are very apt, I know, to compliment each other, and gloſs over the intermediate gradations from thirty to forty with the name of *youth*; but that forſook us, *never to return again*, when we were acquainted with *twenty-five*.

If the aggregate maſs of human exiſtence were put together, and every individual directly

directly born had his *portion* retailed out, it could not exceed the pittance of *thirty* years! But not inſiſting on *this* calculation, I will allow what in nature *we know* is *not to be allowed*, that to *every* perſon, the age of ſixty or even of *ſeventy* is granted; yet ſurely he cannot be ſaid to be young on his journey, who has already reached the half of it. A middle age is all the compliment that can be due to him. What a *mockery* muſt it be therefore to ſay the ſame of one who has completed *half a century!*

It is not to produce the hoary veteran of eighty, or it may be of ninety, who, on

purpoſe to excite *aſtoniſhment*, will *crack his joke*, and laugh at the wrecks of time, ſuch ſcarce inſtances ought no more to be quoted, for a *general* eſtimate of health and longevity, than others who, not having half run that race, are more frequently to be oppoſed againſt them.

In aſſerting ſuch *unfaſhionable* truths as theſe, I may poſſibly offend weak and *vain* minds, but *your* approbation will always reconcile me to that.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE ELEVENTH.

BRISTOL HOTWELL,
December 29, 1793.

Dear Madam,

THE improvements, which have been made in this ſalubrious ſpot, within theſe very few years paſt, are almoſt incredible.

The accommodations of *every kind* are excellent: and the ſociety to be found here, and in the delightful neighbourhood of Clifton, is at once reſpectable and engaging.

If the road which leads to Briſtol from the New Inn, was made to undergo ſome *trifling* repair, it would reflect no *diſgrace* to the parties concerned in it.

Begging people and other nuiſances, ſo peculiar to many *inferior* watering places, owing to the vigilance and exertion of the gentle-

gentleman who *officially* preſides here, are not ſuffered to infeſt the *Hotwell*.

But a word about beggars: to ſee in every place one travels to, ſuch ſwarms of them; a ſtranger in this country who did not help to pay the multiplied thouſands annually collected for their uſe, by a *poſitive* tax, would be naturally led to imagine, that no other proviſion was made for their ſupport, than that which reſulted from *optional* and *precarious* charity. To what effectual purpoſe theſe enormous ſums are applied, when ſo many *myriads* of theſe wretches are *let looſe* on the public, to *prey* on

on their *feelings* for a ſubſiſtence, is a queſtion that deſerves an *honeſt* anſwer from thoſe who are parochially delegated to the management of ſuch concerns.

However deſirable on a *political* ſcore the extent of population may be to a kingdom, it is ſtill a juſt matter of regret, to a ſenſible mind, that ſo many children are brought into the world, who, through the *indigence* or the *depravity* of their parents, ſeem deſtined at their birth, to every human *miſery* and *diſgrace!* But the lower claſſes of people will not allow of theſe reflections; and becauſe the *great firſt cauſe*

of

of all things does not ſo viſibly interrupt the ordinary effects of *ſecond* ones, they will reply to ſuch ſuggeſtions with a very ſignificant look of piety, " *that children are what God pleaſes.*"

For my own part, I am ſeriouſly of opinion, that to be parents under ſuch *lamentable circumſtances* of *poverty* is far from being *humane*, and whatever is not *humane*, altho' it may be *legal*, cannot be ſtrictly *virtuous*.

That it may be *natural*, is of itſelf only an animal vindication for it, and will equally apply to illegitimate intercourſe itſelf;

itſelf; and there are many things, we are aſſured, " which though *lawful*, yet are not *expedient.*"

Learned men, and divines, have informed us, that marriage ſhould be *ſerious*, *ſeaſonable*, *circumſpect*, and *mixed* with *ſeverity*, and that an *intemperate* man in *wedlock*, differs but little from an *adulterer!* It were moſt devoutly to be wiſhed, that ſuch as had no *reaſonable proſpects* of providing, at *leaſt food* and *raiment*, for their little ones, would not merely to *gratify* a *ſelfiſh* and *wanton* appetite, be the *cruel* authors of their birth.

The

The affectionate regards of husband and wife, are but *meretriciously* placed, if they have not *chaster* duties to perform, than those of mutual *sensuality!*

Many apologies for the freedom of communicating such ideas as the present ones, would certainly be due to a lady of very *tangible* and *squeamish attributes*, but happily for me I am not addressing such.

Your's sincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE TWELFTH.

BRISTOL HOTWELL,
January 5, 1794.

Dear Madam,

THE world we live in, is puſhing on apace, you ſee, to the verge of *another age!* *Big* as that reflection is, it is our *danger* that we heed the thought ſo little! But a

truce

truce to theſe vaporiſh effuſions, when ſcarcely any thing but "the compliments of the ſeaſon," and the praiſes of *mince pies*, are bandied about from neighbour to neighbour.

Yeſterday I availed myſelf of the benefit of a dinner card, which had been directed to me on the previous one. The proviſion was excellent, and the gueſts, which made about a dozen, were perfectly agreeable. The donor of this feaſt, is one of thoſe oddities uſually defined by the name of "*an eccentrick character*;" but a marked ſingularity of *dreſs*, of *temper*, and of *habits*,

looks very typical of *infanity*; and in *this ſort* of way, I am firmly of opinion, that there are more people mad, than what are aware of it.

The company were rather prim and formal to each other *before* dinner, but were free and confidential after it.

The contraſted repreſentation of the *ſame* faces, at theſe different intervals, I have often thought would prove no bad ſubject for the *humorous* pencil of ſome modern Hogarth!

We

We were all invited to ſupper, and our merriment did not leſſen with the appearance of freſh candles; and here one might remark, that in *ſome houſes* it is moſtly dulneſs till *cards* and *candle-light* are introduced.

But what more than any thing delighted me at this meeting, was, the reconciliation of two gentlemen, who, through a diſſenſion about ſome *family property*, had not been for a long time before, even on ſpeaking terms, and theſe were *relations* too; but they are now united by the nobler

name of *friends!*—Long may they continue ſuch!

But I have a *better* prayer to make: it is for *you*; and vibrating with every nerve of my ſoul, I here intreat the God of all Love to protect and bleſs you.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE THIRTEENTH.

LONDON, Feb. 15, 1794.

Dear Madam,

NOT to make the ſmalleſt reference in any of my letters, to the ſubject matter, of ſuch as you might occaſionally indulge me with, was, if I rightly recollect, one

one of the ſettled preliminaries of our correſpondence.

Nor have I, to the *preſent* moment, deviated in the ſmalleſt degree from ſo arduous an injunction; but ſince your letter of laſt Thurſday frees me from ſuch reſtraint in future, I avail myſelf thus early of ſuch an "act of grace," by ſincerely lamenting, firſt of all, that compoſitions, ſuch as your pen has honored me with, are fated to *private* admiration only.

My returns, in that way, by clearly proving their own *inferiority*, will be the moſt

moſt engaging motives for your indul gence.

On the ſubject of *natural* affection it is a very nice point to decide. If a child as you aſk, was taken from its parent at a very *early* age, and both had been kept from each other for many years, would *nature* by any *inherent law* of her own; independent of *all other* information, make known the *parent* to the *child*, or the *child* to the *parent*? If anſwered in the *negative*, as I fear it *muſt be*, the concluſion is not a pleaſant one. But liable to cavil as ſuch a phraſe, *if inſiſted on*, unqueſtionably

ably is, ſtill the duties which are implied in it, can never be ſuppoſed to run any ſerious riſk from the *accidental* circumſtance of *expreſſion* only.

Your ideas of generoſity and gratitude I perfectly agree with, and that there is a much greater portion of the firſt to be diſcovered in the world, than there is of the laſt: for in actions of *generoſity* our *pride* is gratified, but in thoſe of gratitude our *humility* is always more, or leſs concerned.

The miſapplication of the word "*obnoxious*," you complain of with too much juſtice,

juſtice, not merely as one of the moſt *common* abuſes in the Engliſh language, but likewiſe *point it out* as the blemiſh of ſome of our literary writers.

The true meaning of this word, by a reference to any dictionary, imports, as you obſerve, no more than "*ſubject*" or "*liable*," or *expoſed to* any thing: although it is ſo vulgarly uſed to convey the ſenſe of "*diſagreeable*," "*diſguſtful*," or "*nauſeous*."

I will do my beſt to improve from your *humorous* and *well worked lecture* of "a bruſh

bruſh and a ſuit of black clothes." But you might have noticed in it, my dear Madam, that in the garments of a *little* man, there is *leſs* to bruſh, than in thoſe of a *larger* perſon, and ſo far as merit goes in keeping them *tidy*, the *little* man is entitled in that compariſon, to a *ſmaller* compliment of praiſe.

In *yourſelf* there is in *all* reſpects an exact *uniformity* of neatneſs, but you muſt have obſerved, with myſelf, that there are not a few who though peculiarly mindful and ſpruce in their apparel, are notwithſtanding in many other inſtances of cleanlineſs,

lineſs, *regardleſs*, and *ſometimes filthy*, and not unlike unto thoſe who are *extravagant* in ſome things, while they are *penurious* in others.

Longer I will not dwell on the variety of topicks with which your letter abounds; let me, however, cheriſh the fond hope, that under the name of "*retirement*," which you ſo much delight in, the publick, as well as myſelf, may hereafter benefit from your valuable thoughts.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

LET-

LETTER THE FOURTEENTH.

LONDON, March 3, 1794.

Dear Madam,

IN the city, or in the country, or wherever elſe we go, the din of politicks is uppermoſt, the converſation is *epidemick*, and one imperceptibly catches it.

My

My reſolutions of obſerving a perfect neutrality whenever topicks, ſo irritable as theſe, are introduced, I am ſorry to ſay, too often betray me.

Either the ſentiment I am called upon to give in turn, after the dinner cloth is removed, which is uſually contrived to moderate the violence of ſuch as *went* before, by being too doubtful for the cordial adoption of either party, I am thence conſidered as the lawful game of both, and rarely eſcape to undergo a ſort of inquiſition, in hopes of exacting a more decided opinion from me, to favor, through thick

and thin, the headſtrong dogmas of one partiſan or the other; and in attempting to reſcue myſelf from ſo unfair an attack, it ſometimes happens, that I cannot preſerve my poize, between the two extremes, with that nice equality I could wiſh: and in *ſuch a predicament*, without intentionally throwing down the gauntlet of a ſettled diſpute, which had *been* jealouſly watched for, it is now eagerly taken up, and there remains no other alternative, but either to ſtrike one's colours, or face the enemy.

The *reaſonable* and *candid* man in political enquiries, is by far too unſavory and

inſipid

inſipid in his notions, to pleaſe the vitiated palate of the preſent times.

But invariably to ſupport the objects of the crown, or habitually to interrupt them, is, in my humble opinion, a very unwarrantable ſacrifice, as well of conſcience, as of national advantage.

An *overbearing* ſway on either ſide, however produced, or under whatever pretext juſtified, is equally dangerous to the true liberty of mankind, and ought by every conſtitutional advance to be *firmly reſiſted*: but waving any further comments at this

perilous conjuncture on the affairs of ſtate, I will venture to expreſs my mind with leſs reſerve, on the temporalities of our church; and that, abſtractedly conſidered from ſo cloſe an alliance with the ſtate, to which, ſince the days of its Divine Founder, ſome have deemed it politick to accommodate the church itſelf.

That there ſhould be *ſuperior* and *inferior* officers in all good eſtabliſhments of every kind and ſort, is an axiom that will be controverted by none but madmen. But in *ſacred* matters this ſuperiority ought ſo far to vary from *ſecular* ones, that it

ſhould

ſhould rather to apply to the greatneſs of *office*, than to the profuſion of *income*.

A ſtrict equality of ſtipend among the clergy, ought no more to be attempted, than the preſent *huge inequality* ſhould remain tolerated. It cannot be, even in a political view, either to the honor or advantage of a church, which is called *Chriſtian*, to hold out to a diſcerning world, ſo *injurious* a diſtinction; and religion, we are ſure, is conſiderably hurt by that *groſs abuſe* of her favors, to the prieſts of her altar, which, ſo partially, deals out the *indigent morſel* to one; to clothe

" another in *purple* and *fine linen*, and enable him to fare *ſumptuouſly* every day."—Gracious God! if it be poſſible that this is well pleaſing in thy eyes, forgive my preſumption; but if thou beholdeſt it as iniquity and wrong, ſhew ſome token of thy indignation againſt it, in the ſight of the heathen, and the avaricious! To the higher circles of laity who are privy to all the artifices, and are not unacquainted with the *ſecret* ſprings of action this unquenchable thirſt after the pomp and riches of the church, cannot well fail, by an aſſociation of ideas, to diſpoſe their minds, to call in queſtion the ſincerity of

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revelation itſelf, by polluting ſuch an enquiry, with the *humility*, and *ſingle heartedneſs*, of ſome of its pampered and lordly teachers: while, on the other hand, the poverty of by far the *greater* part of the clergy refuſes to them, the means of keeping up ſuch reſpectable ſociety as they are expected, and in fact as they ought to do; hence they are reduced to the *pity* of the conſiderate, and the *mockery** of the vulgar.

Too

* Dr. Knox, in the ſecond volume of his Eſſays, p. 196, very pointedly obſerves, that, "To promote a reform-

Too often it happens, that the mind, under theſe cruel and degrading oppreſſions, loſes her becoming pride, and by a combi-

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reformation of manners, additional authority and efficiency muſt be given to the clergy and magiſtrates of London. Both of them are at this time looked upon by the vulgar, both high and low, with ſovereign contempt. The churches are left to curates, or poor incumbents, who, in a place where riches are idolized, hold a rank ſcarcely equal to the keeper of an alehouſe or an oil-ſhop. The juſtices of Middleſex have long been the ſtanding objects of hatred and deriſion. Are the London clergy, who labour ſtrenuouſly in their

combination of events, ſinks into the moſt blamable habits. Proclaim this ye *meek* and *tender minded* prelates to all the world!

offer

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their vocation, and in whom ſo much of the ſtate of morals and chriſtianity depends, particularly countenanced by the miniſtry or the biſhops? It is parliamentary intereſt which procures mitres, and ſtalls, and livings; and though a city curate, or incumbent, ſhould convert millions from the error of their ways, he would ſtill be ſuffered to elbow his way along Cheapſide in his thread-bare coat and tattered gown; pointed out and laughed at by every apprentice. The

common

offer it as a ſmall apology for many indiſcretions among your clergy, which can be fairly traced to that *ſource alone*! It will come

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common people will not diſcriminate. They will deſpiſe religion and morals when they ſee the teachers of them poor, mean, and neglected.

"Is it not a diſgrace to the Defenders of the Faith, &c. that a London clergyman, who has promoted every charity, and probably reformed great numbers, during thirty or forty years, ſhall be ſuffered to live and die with nothing but a curacy and a beggarly lectureſhip? and that, in the mean time, he who

come better from *you*, than themſelves, and it will have a greater weight beſides; and in your reſpective dioceſes, on a triennial viſitation, when the *poor*, the *aged*, the *pious*, and the *learned* of your clergy, are gravely cited, together with the tempted and faulty of your brethren, to encircle

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who is related to a Lord, or connected with Members of Parliament, though he never preached, and can hardly read, ſhall be loaded with dignities and pluralities? He who would reform the capital, I repeat, muſt render the clergy reſpectable in the eyes of the vulgar, and the magiſtrates formidable."

you

you at the altar, and *ſtand obſequiouſly* liſtening, while you, my Lords, dreſſed out with all the plumage of your lawn, *ſeated* on the gaudy chair, make known your pleaſure; deign mitred ſervants! of your lowly maſter, to tell them, at this ſeaſon, and by the authority of his goſpel, that thoſe *hideous* ſins of *pride* and *avarice*, more endanger the future ſafety of the ſoul, than *all* the other vices of the human heart!

And in the unſuſpected frankneſs of your upright conſciences proceed to notice, what *ſubtle impoſtors* they muſt be, who can paſs for *moral* characters, while thus,

thus, execrable before God, and either openly, or elſe *covertly injurious* as ſuch *really* are, to their fellow creatures! Such wholeſome and manly lectures as theſe, well followed up, might, either from their novelty, or their implication, tend to bring about a ſuitable redreſs of grievances, ſo univerſally complained of.

Do not ſuſpect me, my dear Madam, from what I have juſt written, of not bearing a proper homage toward our *Right Rev. Magiſtrates* of the church, and let me here remark, by way of parentheſis, that biſhops

biſhops are emphatically termed *Right Reverend,* in contradiſtinction to other miniſters of God, who are uſually ſtyled *Reverend:* from thence, it may be preſumed, that ſuch clergymen are not reverend *by right.*

But believe me, that notwithſtanding theſe appearances, I have more zeal, for the *true* honor of epiſcopacy, than ſome may imagine.

It was but yeſterday, that in all other reſpects, a very ſhrewd and worthy man, had the *raſhneſs* to intimate, that in the

the various liſts of public and private charity, he ſeldom found the names of prelates, keep pace in contribution with other claſſes of people. This was my immediate check to his preſumption: the biſhops, ſaid I, eminent as you may ſuppoſe them to be for the godlineſs of *humility*, are ever willing in *ſuch* inſtances as you have mentioned, to give the laity an opportunity of *excelling* them; but how to reply to thoſe, who ſo loudly cry ſhame againſt the enormous revenues of our *pluraliſts*, or what ſome call the *dignitaries* of our church, I confeſs myſelf utterly incapable!

It is *futile* to ſay, that ſuch maſſy lots of preferment, are held out as an encouragement to ſuperior piety and learning; becauſe, if that were the real fact, mankind would ſee with their *eyes*, and hear with their *ears*, that perſons of ſuch a deſcription, and only *ſuch perſons* were in the actual poſſeſſion of them.

Out of the numbers, on whom theſe things are heaped, *good* and *literary* characters, doubtleſs there muſt be; but for theſe, or for family connections, or other *private* reaſons, were thoſe golden *cluſters* ſhowered down on your heads?

Anſwer

Anſwer this in truth, ye who are now in the *labors* of a canonry, in the *fatigues* of a ſtall, or in the *toils* of a deanery, and laden beſides, as *moſt* of you are, with a brace of *weighty* livings!

Yes, it is true, you are called *dignified*, becauſe ſo laviſhly provided for; but are you for *that reaſon* a ſuperior clergyman to your *needy* and *drudging* brother? I ween not.

The prieſthood muſt not be degraded by ſuch a compariſon; for that is an order of *divine* and not *human* appointment, and

will not ſuffer thoſe diſtinctions of *ſubalterns* and *ſuperiors*, neceſſary to be maintained in ordinary eſtabliſhments.

Even in the *legal* definition and uſage of the church of England, there cannot be more than the three eſtabliſhed orders of clergy, ſuch as biſhops, prieſts, and deacons. To biſhops, indeed a *ſuperior* authority is committed, as likewiſe there is to a prieſt above the deacon; but of any other order, I have never heard: and to call one clergyman ſuperior to another, on account of his wealthy appointment, is both *abſurd* and *inſulting*. Let them be called, as they ſometimes

ſometimes are, beneficed clergymen, in oppoſition to thoſe who are not ſo.

Such luck indeed may make the poſſeſſors of it, more dignified in the eſtimation of their bankers, but unleſs it is the reward of profeſſional ſervices and abilities, it never can in mine.

But even gold itſelf, we know may be purchaſed at too dear a rate; and if we conſider the number of candidates of equal pretenſions in *this* reſpect, by an intemperate diſtribution of preferment to ſome, it muſt unavoidably plunder from the fair expecta-

expectations of others, and while entering my ſolemn proteſt againſt ſuch proviſions being all *alike*, I will never ceaſe to expreſs my anathemas at their being ſuffered to continue ſo very ſhamefully *unlike*.

If it be aſked, *how* theſe amendments are to be made, and the *antiquated* tale of *difficulty* and of *danger* in attempting it, is made to hobble out again, it is only neceſſary to refer ſuch as may chuſe to offer it, to that maſterly letter, addreſſed ſome few years ago to the late Archbiſhop of Canterbury, by the preſent Biſhop of Landaff,

Landaff, wherein the *juſtice*, the *practicableneſs*, and the *ſafety* of it, are fully and candidly ſtated, and brought home to the conviction of moſt diſintereſted minds, by ſuch arguments, as remain to the preſent hour *unanſwerable*.

To make up for the deficiences of church income, not a few of the clergy are compelled to reſort to various other alternatives, merely for the ſake of a plain and common livelihood!

How evidently this muſt tend to alienate their minds, from more worthy occupations

ons is but too obvious. The profeſſion of a clergyman, and the buſineſs of a ſchool-maſter, ſo often united, are not ſo compatible with each other, as ſome may imagine.

The office of the firſt is dignified in itſelf, and he who has the honor of being called to it, ſhould not ſtoop to, nor blend it with any inferior avocation. The mechaniſm of conjugating words, and of conſtruing paſſages, chiefly from profane authors, and ſetting taſks to boys, can never be conſidered as appropriate em-

ploy-

ployments for thoſe who are the delegated embaſſadors of God.

A teacher of languages and an eloquent inſtructor of mankind, on the grand concerns of futurity, require contraſted contemplations, and call for different *abilities*, *habits*, and *addreſs*. Laymen, on a variety of accounts, are better adapted to the concerns of a ſchool; the very dependant ſtate of a ſchoolmaſter, liable all times to the humour and reproof of the parents, joined to the obſtinacy and perverſe manners of their children, cannot but too much diſturb the ſerenity of a mind ſet apart for

more

more tranquil purſuits, and make a daily ſacrilege on that time, which every one, who has been ordained, ſolemnly conſecrated himſelf at the altar, to devote to concerns as different, as they were more momentous.

Reſources there certainly are, of a *nobler* kind, for thoſe of the clergy, whoſe circumſtances require an augmentation of income.

The ſtudy, and practice of medicine, under certain reſtrictions, cannot ſurely be thought unworthy of their attention, when the

the *Great Preacher of Righteouſneſs* himſelf healed all manner of diſeaſes, and commiſſioned his apoſtles to do the ſame. Indeed the practice of phyſick, at one time, was confined to the prieſthood; and there are not wanting examples in this country, of many clergymen availing themſelves of their knowledge in the therapeutick art, as well to their own, as to the advantage of others. We have hiſtorians in the church; *muſicians*, *painters*, *chemiſts*, and *politicians*, there are, world without end.

We have alſo linguiſts, aſtronomers, geographers, logicians, philoſophers, and

mathematicians, in great abundance. Surely the ſame capacities which became *eminent* in theſe, might with equal application, and certainly with *more Chriſtian arguments* for it, have been qualified for as good *phyſicians*: nay, the accumulated portion of that very time, which is ſo largely ſacrificed by ſome to hunting, to dancing, at circulating libraries, and the *feminine* amuſements of a *card table!* might have gone a conſiderable way, if ſo it had been directed, to have dignified their underſtandings with the laudable ſcience of medicine. The endeavour is perhaps ſtill within the compaſs of reſolution and aſſiduity.

The

The divine and the phyſician being thus in concord, the gratuitous interpoſition of the latter among the poor and afflicted of his flock, could not fail to ſweeten and endear the documents and the perſon of the former.

Nor ought ſuch humane deportment either to give umbrage, or excite the jealouſy of any other local practitioner; for he ſhould conſider it, as a relief rather, both to his mind and labors, that ſuch reſpectable ſanction was ſo near at hand, either to council with at pleaſure, or reſort to on emergency; and from thoſe who

were ſufficiently opulent, ſuch a clergyman is, beyond the poſſibility of a doubt, as fairly entitled to a ſuitable recompenſe, as any other perſon, who finding that the meritorious exertion of *one* talent did not afford him a *reſpectable* maintenance, would if he was in the poſſeſſion of it, naturally call in the aid of a ſecond.

Excuſe me, my dear Madam, for dwelling thus long on a ſubject, which, further than its common equity, can be very little entertaining to you.

The

The Biſhop of Landaff, on whom I called this morning, has been ſo obliging to direct the cover of this letter, which I hope may not exceed in weight the uſual allowance of a frank.

Your's ſincerely,

EDWARD BARRY.

FINIS.